



# Forest Health *Notes*



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## 2011 Gypsy Moth Trapping Results

The 2011 statewide gypsy moth trapping has been completed and once again North Carolina avoided gypsy moth establishment, though Currituck County and a portion of Dare County remain in quarantine for the insect.

North Carolina is on the leading edge of the gypsy moth front and as such all 100 counties are trapped each year for male gypsy moths using pheromone-baited traps. Male gypsy moths are targeted by trapping efforts because female gypsy moths do not fly. The gypsy moth program in North Carolina is currently under the jurisdiction of the N.C. Department of Agriculture (NCDA) – Plant Industry Division and we thank them for providing us with these trapping results.

Contractors, through a federal program called Slow The Spread (STS), trap the northern portion of North Carolina, while numerous cooperators including the N.C. Forest Service (NCFS) trap the remainder of the state, including some overlap with STS counties. The trapping efforts provide gypsy moth population information that allows managers to utilize the most efficient treatment methods available.

The NCDA - Plant Industry Division uses the trap counts to determine patterns of gypsy moth infestations, though the presence of trapped male moths does not necessarily indicate there is a reproducing gypsy moth population in the area. Trap counts compiled over several years can reveal with more confidence whether a location is infested with a reproducing gypsy moth population, or if the moths caught were likely blown in during a weather event, usually denoted by a few moths found in scattered traps.

The NCDA - Plant Industry Division also conducts surveys at locations suspected of having reproducing populations to locate additional life stages (i.e. egg masses or pupa cases). Along with trapping data, these surveys help to determine what treatment is most appropriate for a suspected infestation. These surveys are ongoing.

This year, a total of 11,837 acres in six locations were treated for gypsy moth in North Carolina. Treatments for gypsy moth focus on either killing the insect outright or disrupting its ability to find a mate and vary based on the gypsy moth life stage being targeted. Five of these locations were within the STS area and included treatments in Caswell (3), Granville (1), and Rockingham (1) counties. Total treatments in the STS area covered 11,437 acres. The remaining treatment of 400 acres occurred in Onslow County.

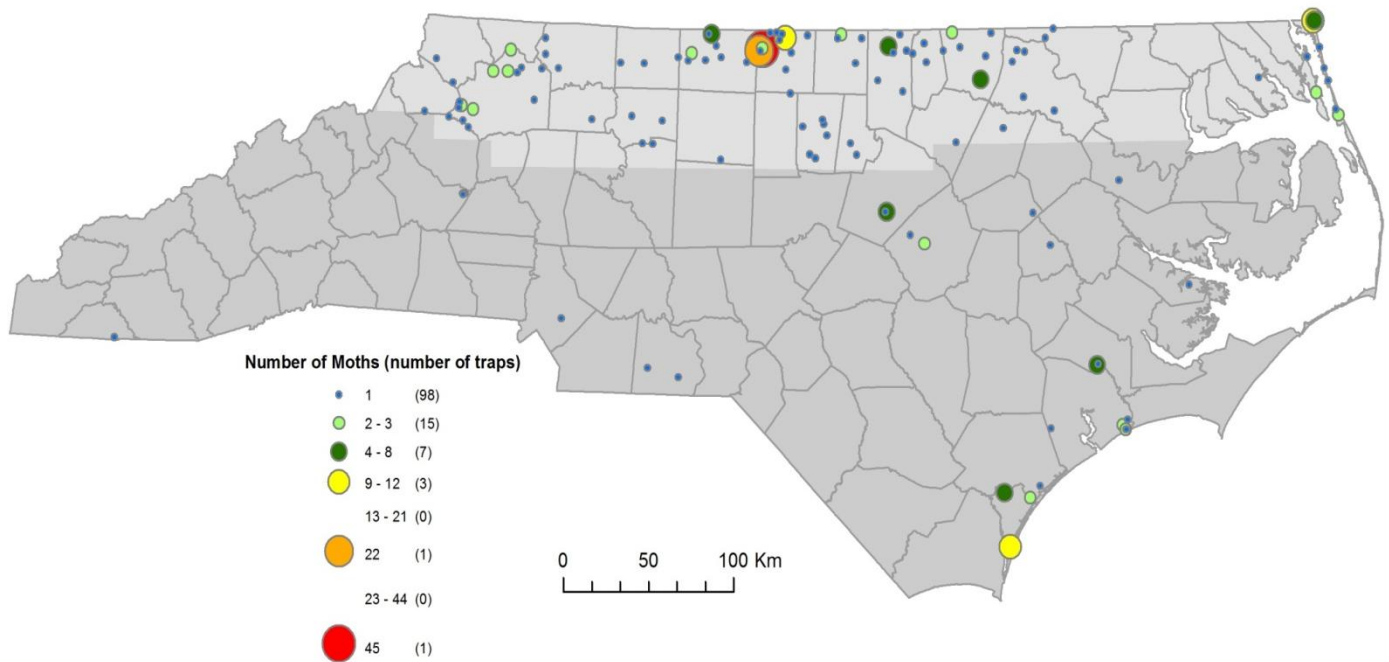
This year, 10 counties throughout the state were either entirely or partially trapped by NCFS personnel. We'd like to recognize and send a big thank you to the following counties for their assistance in this year's trapping effort: Anson, Avery, Bladen, Cherokee, Clay, Hyde, McDowell, Onslow, Pender, and Union. The information these counties provided is very valuable in the ongoing efforts to monitor this pest.

The 2011 trapping season had the lowest total trap capture in at least 20 years. Statewide there were 19,210 traps placed by contractors, including 2,531 by NCFS personnel. Of the total, only 124 traps were classified as positive, meaning they caught at least one gypsy moth, and a total of 274 moths were caught (see 2011 Gypsy Moth Trap Catches map on Page 3).

### **Prospects for 2012**

The NCDA - Plant Industry Division is only planning to treat one location next year, in western Caswell County. The site will be treated using mating disruption techniques, which are used when targeting adult moths. Based on low egg mass counts this fall, no treatments focused on gypsy moth larvae are proposed in 2012. NCDA - Plant Industry Division Gypsy Moth Program Manager, Matt Andresen, noted that 2012 will be the first year in at least a decade that no treatments are proposed for larval populations of this pest.

**2011 Gypsy Moth Trap Catches (lighter grey shading is the STS area)**



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